

Teaching for Excellence™

Domains of Effective Instruction & Tool Set Inventory

Domain 1: The Physical Learning Environment

Physical layout, lighting, organization, maintenance, cleanliness and neatness impact learning. In addition, the use of visuals, color, sound and other aesthetics and visual elements impact student receptivity and learning.

a. Classroom lighting

- i. Light is bright and yet comfortable
- ii. The room has natural light or full spectrum lighting
- iii. Window shades are open except when they must be closed for video or glare
- iv. Projected images and point sizes are enlarged to facilitate effective interpretation when lights are on and shades open
- v. Projections are bright enough to allow lights being on

b. Seating arrangements

- i. Students face the speaker, teacher and projections and shift seating as necessary to maintain such
- ii. Chairs/desks are arranged for ease of ***appropriate*** access
- iii. Seating shifts to be appropriate for each activity or phase of instruction and learning as it happens and changes
- iv. Arrangements provide adequate space for movement and access to each student

c. General maintenance

- i. Windows are clean and in good repair
- ii. Window shades are clean and in good working order and alignment
- iii. Light fixtures, furniture, walls, doors, cabinets, etc. are all in good repair and appearance
- iv. Floor and all surfaces are clean, neat and without trash
- v. There are trash containers spaced closely enough for ease of use
- vi. Wall postings are all in good shape and appearance
- vii. All electronic and mechanical equipment is in excellent working order and appropriate for the task

d. Climate

- i. The temperature and humidity levels are comfortable
- ii. The environment is free of unpleasant or excessive odors from excessive perfumes or noxious chemicals
- iii. There are no distracting sounds such as from lawn mowers, air-conditioners, traffic or activities within hearing range

e. Visuals on walls, boards, projection areas and elsewhere

- i. Future important concepts are displayed in advance
- ii. Visuals are easily read and interpreted from anywhere in the room, including the back, middle or corner seats, without turning off the lights
- iii. Visuals are neatly arranged and well-aligned
- iv. Visuals are high enough, including Smartboard™ images, that all can see without obstruction
- v. Fonts, point sizes, colors, graphics and other images are easily interpreted and correct for the purpose and age level

f. Instructional area layout and organization

- i. All supplies and materials are immediately accessible without time gaps
- ii. The space between instructor and students is open and the instructor is clearly visible
- iii. Students are clearly visible to the instructor throughout instruction
- iv. Students' hands are visible
- v. Teaching positions including for instruction, stories, correction, and attention-getting are established and used
- vi. Platforms are appropriately used for visibility

g. Voice and other sounds

- i. Sound is clear and comfortable
- ii. Modulation and other auditory cues and devices are effectively used

Domain 2: The Human Learning Environment Tools for Impacting Student Achievement

Maslow, Glasser, Wlodkowski and others have identified human emotional and physical needs that have a significant impact on student motivation, effort, attitude and commitment.

a. Command presence

- iii. Friendly, authoritative, not authoritarian voice tone
- iv. Gestures are open, strong, aligned with message
- v. Steps forward into students when addressing them
- vi. Stands with two feet together
- vii. Attire is professional and a step above students' attire
- viii. Posture is strong and straight
- ix. The teacher uses movement for effective emphasis, attention, respect, caring and impact with content and learners
- x. Choice of words is polite and direct
- xi. There are no unnecessary "frames" and words such as, "I would like to ask you ..."
- xii. Respectful, inviting, inclusive language is used
- xiii. There are no instances of sarcasm or put downs
- xiv. Expressions convey comfort, confidence and competence without fear or nervousness
- xv. Everything said is reasonable, supported, and followed through ... no back downs
- xvi. Mistakes are admitted readily and apologized for
- xvii. Responsibility is taken for error and confusion
- xviii. Fast and smooth

b. With-it-Ness

- i. The teacher is aware of
 - 1. all student's actions and behaviors
 - 2. disengaged student activity, actions and behaviors
 - 3. hidden disruptions/activity
 - 4. energy levels and adjusts to maintain appropriate levels
- ii. Students are aware of teacher's awareness or with-it-ness
- iii. Students' respect and appreciation is drawn
- iv. The teacher is respected, effective and cared about by the students.

c. Instructional positions

- i. There is one place in the front of the room for information dissemination/direct instruction
- ii. The teacher enters into student space to increase awareness/attention

iii. There are purposeful side spots for stories/conversational times

- iv. There is one spot for general correction

d. Energy management

- i. Energy levels/waves are observed and managed
- ii. Energy waves are purposely and effectively used
- iii. Time during energy troughs/lows is effectively created, managed and used
- iv. Energizers and re-energizers are effectively used

e. Voice: volume, tone, and other auditory tools

- i. Pauses are effectively used for attention
- ii. Shifting volume is effectively used for emphasis or attention
- iii. Voice variations are used effectively for emphasis or meaning
- iv. Tone variations are effectively used to access emotion

f. Inviting and inclusive language

- i. Purposeful use of “we,” “our” and “us” to share ownership and responsibility
- ii. Avoidance of “you” when referencing projections of self

g. Sarcasm, put downs and bullying absence

- i. Sarcasm is unacceptable, not used, and effectively and protectively eliminated because of potential direct and collateral harm
- ii. Put downs are not used nor allowed
- iii. All forms of bullying by all members of the environment are not permitted

h. The 6 Keys

- i. Appropriate levels of safety from fear of embarrassment or loss of dignity are maintained
- ii. Ensured success and evidence toward success (including challenging, rigorous curriculum and assessment with essential scaffolding and support) are always present
- iii. Feelings of acceptance and belonging are fostered and protected
- iv. Fun and enjoyment are monitored and supported
- v. Meaningful and appropriate relationships are fostered and supported
- vi. Appropriate autonomy in goal setting and on-going decisions is incorporated

i. Student involvement from interaction to engagement

The teacher's management of instruction and learning involvement is effective for each learner through options, structure, support and process.

j. Focus cycles

The teacher deliberately and effectively manages timing, voice, visuals and activities to support and utilize the reality that people day dream, lose focus, 40% to 70% of the day.

Domain 3: General Teaching Tools and Techniques

Effective teachers draw upon a large repertoire of tools and techniques to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their instructional activities, methods and strategies. These include feedback, guided and independent practice timing, support methods, voice, presence, word choice, positioning, questioning techniques, instruction and direction tools, instructional material management, ways of teaching and maintaining appropriate procedures, and the many aspects of what is commonly thought of as classroom management.

a. Agendas

- i. Posted and/or processed by students
- ii. Reviewed and understood by students

b. Call Back and Steps Back procedures

- i. Taught, practiced, automatic and consistent
- ii. Teacher begins after all students are ready
- iii. Teacher uses compassionate and consistent tools to remind, practice and keep automaticity
- iv. Alternative procedures match varying circumstances

c. Communication in subject matter language

- i. Students are taught, practice and progress in reading in the language of the subject
- ii. Students are taught, practice and progress in writing in the language of the subject
- iii. Students are taught, practice and progress in speaking in the language of the subject

d. Complete sentence responses

- i. Students respond to questions and prompts during instruction in complete sentences that convey meaning
- ii. Teachers use choral repetition with complete sentences to follow-up word and phrase responses

e. Content concept posters

- i. Posters are interpretable from every student location
- ii. Posters address major, foundational concepts for pre-instruction, focused instruction and post-instruction
- iii. Posters adhere to criteria for effective visuals
- iv. Icons or pictures are used as appropriate for conceptualization
- v. Posters are designed and developed by students

f. Copying, replicating, emulating

- i. Copying, replicating or emulating is used as a tool for pre-instruction
- ii. Copying, replicating or emulating is used and monitored until skills are learned
- iii. Copying as a learning tool is not discouraged, it is encouraged and monitored until students are capable of success on their own

g. Cool Downs - closure

- i. Active engagement of the learners' minds/muscles in bringing closure to the learning
- ii. Cause students to leave with a feeling of success
- iii. Fast and simple

h. Criteria-for-Credit

- i. Criteria-for-Credit (C4C) is used to ensure work adheres to quality criteria
- ii. C4C does not require complete or correct unless adequate iterations and support stations and systems are provided
- iii. C4C is consistently applied, i.e., if it is said, it is followed through

i. Delayed assessment and practice

- i. Assessments are administered after adequate distributed practice and incremental development to ensure success with rigorous and challenging standards
- ii. Practice is used only after adequate repetitions in class over enough days to ensure the practice will be done correctly since practice makes permanent

j. The 7 Tools for Directions and instructions

- i. The students' attention is obtained before beginning directions
- ii. When appropriate, the teacher tells about how long it will take to explain the direction before the students are told to start
- iii. Launch buttons are clarified as appropriate
- iv. Directions are stated one-step-at-a-time (completion by the fastest and slowest students of the single or multi-sub-step direction will be within 10 seconds – the 10 second gap rule.), deflected when appropriate
- v. The launch button or start signal is effectively used
- vi. The teacher pauses until the last student completes the step, which should be within 10 seconds of the first student
- vii. Progress is monitored through completion until "steps back" are used

k. Effort recognized

- i. Manage by time, not completion with recognition given for consistent hard work
- ii. Recognition is given for great effort, hard work, diligence ... not level of achievement or mastery
- iii. encouraged, identified, monitored, recognized, reported and documented
- iv. Recognition symbols

I. Essential questions or objectives

- i. They are posted for and/or processed by students
- ii. They are understandable to students
- iii. They convey purpose, value and/or benefit of the learning

m. Every, Every, Every

- i. **Every** student articulates the or a **correct** response to every question/prompt/problem during instruction
- ii. **Every** student records/processes **every correct** “thing” that is to be recorded in collaborative/group learning
- iii. **Every** student does and completes every learning activity **correctly**
- iv. Corrections happen during processes, not after it is completed or later.

n. Feedback, criticism, praise and critiquing tools

- i. Students are provided regular opportunity for feedback which is learning through self-reflection, thought, discovery
- ii. Criticism is avoided, but provided when and how it is appropriate
- iii. Praise is provided equally to all
- iv. Feedback and critiques are both understood and used

o. Learning Support Stations (LSS)

- i. Appropriate Solution, Answer, Hint, Information, Exemplar, One-on-One Coaching are provided and monitored to ensure correct practice and processing
- ii. LSS are places and means for double checking, not seeking help
- iii. Codes are used as needed for increased participation

p. Manage by Time, NOT Numbers or Completion

q. Standardized tests, multiple choice – Research-supported preparation

Design analysis and test-taking skills are taught, utilized for instruction and not used for assessment

r. Model exactly – Ask students first to replicate what’s modeled

- i. Start by showing a procedure completed and facilitate conversation
- ii. Model a procedure or skill as a part of instruction
- iii. Have students do exactly what was modeled, not something similar or a similar one, until they can do it themselves
- iv. Lastly have student perform the procedure or skill on a “similar” one

s. Music

- i. Procedures such as “Music on, you talk. Music off, I talk” are consistently followed
- ii. The four criteria for music selection are followed
- iii. There are no commercials and talk within the music played
- iv. Music volume is conducive to conversations

t. Next-step processing

Process in scaffolding steps to ensure all students reach greater depth and rigor.

- i. After a question, students are asked a next step question to prompt correct, more complex and deeper perspectives
- ii. After tasks and activities, students are asked to process further, e.g. compare, explain, summarize, predict, argue for, etc...

u. Practice and interaction tools

Build Proficiency, Speed, Automaticity and Understanding

- i. Practice is always supported so it is done correctly
- ii. Learning Support Stations are provided for each developmental level
- iii. Distributed practice of varying topics before memory is gone occurs daily
- iv. Distributed practice of topics about to be needed as background knowledge as appropriate
- v. Distributed practice with incremental development happens almost daily
- vi. Distributed practice accountability occurs through inclusion on unit and culminating assessments

v. Procedures – Teaching, Coaching and Maintaining

- i. Students are given reasons (benefits) they value for procedures
- ii. Procedures are taught, practiced, and corrected as needed
- iii. Procedures are consistently followed
- iv. Procedures are established as needed to ensure safety, efficiency, effectiveness and orderly structure

w. Questioning tools

- i. Open-ended questions used effectively , fully supported, scaffolded, every student learns correct responses
- ii. Questions that effectively provide checks for understanding through observation, and yet all students learn correct responses
- iii. Effective use of Choral Repetition and Choral Response
- iv. Effective use of TRQ and/or TDL
- v. Effectively requiring complete sentence responses
- vi. Evidence of effective use of Reflection Journals
- vii. Effective use of Deflected questions
- viii. Point Processing is effectively and consistently used
- ix. Reflection prompts

x. Rubrics

- i. Exemplars and anchors are used to develop rubrics
- ii. Rubrics are used to coach students to standards
- iii. Rubrics are appropriately analytical during learning and assessment to ensure mastery of important dimensions of targeted performance abilities
- iv. Student-developed rubrics and criteria from exemplars and anchors with appropriate levels of facilitation

y. Show Me You Understand

- i. Whenever possible, students are given correct answers/responses to practice problems/prompts requiring process and told to use the appropriate processes to show they are correct
- ii. Where appropriate with assessments, students are asked to follow correct process to prove a given response to a prompt is correct

z. Standards maintained

- i. Students are required to re-assess after two part corrective loops until standards are met (alternative approaches ensuring standards are fine.)
- ii. Extra Credit is not available
- iii. Averages and point totals cannot be used to permit students “completing” without having mastered essential standards

aa. Stress reducers, energizers and attention acquisition

- i. Students are taught to pause for “effective” deep breathing during assessments and other stressful experiences to reduce stress
- ii. Students are verbally encouraged to take a deep breath before they are given directions as a means of gaining attention, energizing, and reducing stress
- iii. Students are encouraged to write for 7 to 10 minutes “venting” their frustrations and fears before events such as assessments they are concerned about

bb. Transitions

- i. If music is used, the criteria are followed
- ii. Transitions are fast and smooth
- iii. Gaps when the teacher is busy but the students could be idle are filled with transitions

cc. Vocabulary

- i. Vocabulary is taught before using games for reinforcement and depth
- ii. Six plus two steps are followed in teaching vocabulary
- iii. Descriptions, explanations and examples are used before definitions

dd. Warm ups – preparation

- i. Last about 3 to 5 minutes
- ii. Are typically managed by time and not numbers or completion, thus keeping all students busy interacting with the subject matter for the duration
- iii. Are not graded or gone over
- iv. Are NOT material from previous days they have not mastered
- v. Are easy enough and differentiated enough that all students warm-up effectively, do them correctly without help or support
- vi. Cause students to warm-up their brains, and muscles when appropriate, in subject matter by interacting with either a variety of material they have all totally mastered, or material they have not yet learned about in order to foreshadow (e.g. having students trace over and over again, until time is called, a diagram they will be learning about.)
- vii. Warm-ups cause all student to be in a position of starting in the challenges of the lesson having just been successful functioning within the area of the subject matter just as in warm ups in athletics and the performing arts

Domain 4: Participation, Interaction and Engagement Tools Including Learning Strategies/Activities, Methods and On-Going/Formative Assessment and Adjustment

Learning requires students interact and engage with the content. There are many different and appropriate ways to do this depending on the nature of the subject matter, the needs of the students, the standards being taught and the alignment with them.

Teaching for Excellence™ has many good activities and strategies for causing interaction and engagement from which to choose. Though the strategies/activities are considered by many to be the most valuable, how they are used is just as important.

a. Strategy/Activity Tools Effectiveness – Critical Attributes

- i. Strategies align with the content standard and performance levels
- ii. Developmental, capacity-building, scaffolding steps are used
- iii. Next-Steps Processing Loops to consistently extend and deepen
- iv. Strategies are modeled and explained effectively and efficiently
- v. Everyone records, processes all the embedded content
- vi. The activities are used as on-going/formative assessment
- vii. The Tools in Dimensions 1, 2 and 3 are used effectively
- viii. The strategies critical attributes are applied

b. Strategy/Activity Variety

- i. 12 to 1
- ii. All Talk
- iii. Alphabet and other boxes for categorization and classification
- iv. Back Tracks
- v. Balloon Toss
- vi. Bracket Buster
- vii. Carousel Graffiti and extended
- viii. Cartoon Conversation
- ix. Concept Attainment
- x. Concept Bundles
- xi. Concept Cards and Posters, Student-Developed
- xii. Concept Connections
- xiii. Concept Sheets
- xiv. Conceptual T-Charts
- xv. Core Races
- xvi. Copy Me Teaching
- xvii. Defending Preferences
- xviii. Depictions
- xix. Dice Game
- xx. Door Passes
- xxi. Dump Lump Clump
- xxii. Face Space
- xxiii. Final Countdown
- xxiv. First Looks
- xxv. Five Liners
- xxvi. Four Square
- xxvii. Four-Two-One
- xxviii. Four Ways
- xxix. Frisbee and Snow Ball Quizzes

- xxx. Gallery Walk Notes
- xxxi. Give 'n Get
- xxxii. Instant Reply and Instant Replay Extended
- xxxiii. Interactive Notes
- xxxiv. M-4-2-1 and 4-2-1
- xxxv. Museums
- xxxvi. Musical Madness
- xxxvii. No Peeking Extended
- xxxviii. Partner Review
- xxxix. Non-linguistic Representations
 - xl. Numbered Call Out
 - xli. Response and Reflection Journals
 - xl. Search and Rescue
 - xl.iii. Similes and Metaphors
 - xl. Step-by-Step Processing
 - xl. Stop and Jot
 - xl. Student-developed rubrics
 - xl. Summary Slips
 - xl. Summarizing Throughout

- xlix. Survey with Your Feet
 - I. Survivor
 - li. Swap Meet
 - lii. T and π Charts for Procedures
 - liii. Table Jam
 - liv. Table Races
 - lv. Timed Olympics
 - lvi. Total Recall
 - lvii. Triple Jeopardy
 - lviii. Turn and Talk
 - lix. Vanishing Content
 - lx. Vocabulary Development – 6 + 2 step process
 - lxi. Vocabulary Power Grid
 - lxii. Walk About Quiz
 - lxiii. Wall Drills – Fact Tracks
 - lxiv. Wall Drills – Skill Builder
 - lxv. Wall Drills – Pattern Finder
 - lxvi. Word Splash
 - lxvii. Other _____

Domains 5 through 8: Coachable through interview and review of plans, materials, approaches and assessment

Domain 5: Classroom Curriculum Alignment, Design and Flow Tools

Curriculum is aligned with standards. In addition, classroom curriculum is incrementally developed and then revisited through distributed practice and continued incremental development.

- a. Alignment to Standards
- b. Instructional Activities Alignment
- c. Pre-instruction
- d. Distributed Practice
- e. Incremental Development Over Time
- f. Prioritized Curriculum
- g. Three Part Lesson Plans
- h. Topic Planners
- i. Delayed Practice

Domain 6: Classroom Assessment for Learning: On-going/Formative, Summative & Culminating

Formative Assessment is On-Going Assessment throughout the teaching and learning process leading up to Summative Assessment at the end of a unit of instruction. Culminating (or End of Course/End of Grade Level) Assessment is at the end. Formative Assessment provides feedback to the teacher throughout the unit as to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning activities. Formative assessment tools are found in Domain 4.

Summative Assessment occurs at the end of the unit and provides the means to assess the unit objectives and the distributed practice objectives, providing corrective loops focused on those objectives, and finally re-assessment ensuring the objective are met.

Culminating Assessment occurs at the end of the course or grade level and is used to assess, correct and re-assess until mastery of each of the essential course/grade level objectives or standards.

- a. Formative Assessment – See Domain 4
 - i. Activities are not graded
 - ii. Activities are used to provide knowledge (not grades or marks) to the teacher as to the levels of learning
 - iii. Adjustments are made to instruction based on observations by the teacher

- b. Summative Assessment
 - i. Parallel forms for re-assessment
 - ii. Parallel forms and/or study guides for preparation and for corrective loop practice
 - iii. Corrective instruction focused on assessment objectives
 - iv. Constructed for assessment of individual current objectives
 - v. Constructed for assessment of cumulative distributed practice practiced during the unit
 - vi. New objectives cover approximately one week’s worth of content
 - vii. Mastery lock is built in
 - viii. Items and objectives are aligned to the standards
 - ix. Multiple-choice, true/false, and matching are not used without students being accountable for all their work/process, explanation, defense, etc...
 - x. Where feasible and appropriate, answers are provided that students check against
 - xi. Timing – assessments are administered after ample distributed practice and evidence to ensure high success at increased standards
 - xii. Performance assessment is used as appropriate for standards with coaching until mastery
 - xiii. Rubrics are provided with clarifying anchors for appropriate prompts
 - xiv. Mastery of objectives is expected, supported and required

c. Culminating Assessment

- i. Accurately assesses the major, culminating objectives/standards at the end of course or grade level
- ii. Parallel forms for re-assessment
- iii. Parallel forms and/or study guides for preparation and for corrective loop practice
- iv. Corrective instruction focused on assessment objectives
- v. Mastery lock is built in
- vi. Items and objectives are aligned to the standards
- vii. Multiple-choice, true/false, and matching are not used without students being accountable for all their work/process, explanation, defense, etc...
- viii. Where feasible and appropriate, answers are provided that students check against.
- ix. Performance assessment is used as appropriate for standards with coaching until mastery
- x. Rubrics are provided with clarifying anchors for appropriate prompts
- xi. Mastery of objectives is expected, supported and required

Domain 7: Implementing New Higher Standards and Assessments

- a. Scaffolding provided to ensure enabling skills, understandings and abilities are learned
- b. Communication In Content Language - Students are required to read, write, listen and speak in the language of the content
- c. Describe, Explain, Defend, Justify, Connect, Apply

Domain 8: Research Findings and Deep Conceptual Frameworks as Tools

Key to maximum achievement is using the best possible knowledge, skills and practices available. This includes understanding the nature and timing of learning, the impact of motivation drivers and “flow,” and essential concepts and research findings that enable the most effective selection of approaches, methods, tools and techniques for each student.

Specifically, a deep and working understanding of the following provides critical decision screen tools.

- a. Framework for Understanding Poverty
- b. Effective Schools
- c. Anderson’s Curve – Learning Time and/or Stages
- d. 6 Keys for High Motivation

Domain 9: Professional Responsibilities

- a. Record grades after the standard is met
- b. Recognize effort
- c. Two types of grades – progress and achievement
- d. Grades to promote learning
- e. Parent letters and memos
- f. Open House
- g. Building a team with parents